



# Desert Rose

Editor: LCpl Pollard  
S1- Rep  
July 2004

**Proudly Serving The Families of 3/7**



**BATTALION FIRST SERGEANTS, COMPANY COMMANDERS, SERGEANT MAJOR, AND THE COMMANDING OFFICER POSE FOR A PHOTO- JUNE 2004 AL QAIM, IRAQ.**

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Battalion Commander: LtCol Lopez  
Executive Officer: Maj. Henderson  
Sergeant Major: SgtMaj Huff  
FRO: 1stLt Huerta  
Key Volunteer Coordinator:  
Mandi Roe  
Co Coordinator: Lorie Lasater  
Key Volunteer Advisor: Lynn Lopez



Greetings from Al Qaim,

The Marines, Sailors and Soldiers of Task establishing security and bringing a better life

a very violent and dangerous area develop into a relatively peaceful area where governance, Iraqi Security Forces and a blossoming new freedom have been born. The market areas of all our cities are flourishing like never before. There is new construction everywhere you look. The school year ended with the students taking their advancement exams without incident – children play in clean streets. Our area is starting to emerge as an example of success as we conduct the transfer of authority that will give self-governance to the Iraqi People.

Force 3/7 are doing an incredible job to the people of Al Qaim. We have seen

This is still Iraq, so we will still face danger and uncertainty in the months to come, but we are well on our way to accomplishing our mission. The Iraqi Security Forces and local Government have become our allies in the fight against terrorism in our area.

Living conditions for our Marines and Sailors have improved dramatically over the past months. Non-existent in our last deployment, air-conditioned living space is the norm – thanks to Master Gunnery Sergeant French's ability to create electricity. Every Marine and Sailor now has a real bed to sleep in. Care packages and mail from home is still a highpoint of the week – we are averaging a delivery every other day now, thanks to our CSSD brethren. Our telephone and computer capability remain our lifeline back to loved ones in the states – thanks to Gunny McGraw's technical expertise for keeping it running. Although we are still eating tray rations in the chow hall, believe it or not, we now have our own pizza, kabob, chicken shack on camp Al Qaim and the Gunny Veigh chicken shack at Camp Gannon. Master Gunnery Sergeant French says we're going to make the Marines soft!

Despite rumors, all indicators are still pointing towards this being a 7-month deployment. The lead elements for 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 8<sup>th</sup> Marines have arrived to replace 3rd Bn, 4th Mar. This is a great sign that things are still on track. We look forward to the arrival of the advance party of our replacements. I still remember how happy the Marines were to see the Bulgarian advance party last August. As always, I assure you - we will keep you informed. We are still planning our return for mid to late September. Our return will always remain mission dependent!

We have re-named Camp Husayba in honor of Capt Richard J. Gannon.

A very special thank you to Mrs. Sally Gannon, Jessica Gibson and all of our KVN. You have done and given so much for your fellow spouses and families in support of this Battalion. You are blessings to the Marines and Sailors of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines.

Until our return!

God, Family, Country And Corps  
M. A. Lopez  
"Blade Six"



## CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

(July 2004)

Ok, I admit it. I want a Harley. I used to have a motorcycle and sold it many years ago, but I've never really gotten the motorcycle bug out of my system. As a small church pastor with a family to support, I never felt I could afford a nice Harley. Now that my kids are grown I think I might just be able to swing it.

If you're wondering if my wife is reading about this for the first time, the answer is, "No." But I must admit I'm kind of sorry I didn't think of springing it on her that way. It would have been fun. Being the wonderful, loving and supportive wife that she is, when I did e-mail Tracie about my desire she was all for it. Sometimes she's so supportive I almost feel guilty. I wonder if there is a method to her madness? Anyway, I said I "almost feel guilty." Seriously, we'll take a good look at our finances when I get home and, together, make a responsible decision about the Harley.

That's what I want to talk to you about, being responsible with your finances. With all that tax-free money coming in, all of us are probably feeling a little richer than we usually do. Whether it's cars, trucks, motorcycles, big screen TVs or taking a trip, I hear so many Marines and Sailors talking about the big purchases they plan to make when they get home. Before rushing into that big purchase please consider the following advice. It will help you make a wise decision and possibly save you from serious financial woes down the road.

First of all, remember that you'll be making less money. When you subtract Family Separation Allowance, Combat Pay, Per Diem, and Tax-Exemption benefits, your paycheck will be smaller by \$800.00 or more per month than you've grown accustomed to during deployment.

Furthermore, prices at home have increased and some families have grown larger because children have been born since we've been away. Guys, you may not realize how much more money it takes to meet your family's needs when you get back than before you deployed. Even single Marines must consider the sharp rise in gas prices and ever increasing car insurance premiums.

So whether you are single or married, work out a budget that accounts for your smaller paycheck and possible cost of living increases. If you're married, do it together with your spouse and set some reasonable financial goals on which you can both agree. Make room in your budget to be generous. With the blessings of some extra income from deployment make a donation to a worthy ministry or charity. Use some of your windfall to pay down debts, especially high interest credit card debt. Finally, if you haven't already done so, start a solid savings plan for emergencies, your kids' college education, and retirement?

If after you've taken care of all these financial concerns there's room in your budget for that big purchase then go for it! You've certainly earned it. I've narrowed my Harley down to just one of two models. Now if I can just decide on the color.

Chaplain Dave Slater



# COMPANY MESSAGE BOARDS

## WEAPONS

Our Dear Friends and Families,

Marhaaba! Once again, I bring you warm (literally) greetings from sunny Al Qaim, Iraq in order to bring you up to speed on the progress of Weapons Company. Your sons continue to work diligently through the increasing temperatures with incredible focus. We have been fortunate over the past month by not incurring any casualties from combat actions and it seems the Battalion's security efforts are really paying off. Our enemy has become quite apprehensive about showing his presence to us. This is a direct result of our efforts-our steadfast patrolling function is a significant hindrance to terrorist activities in our area of responsibility.

We have not had any adjustments to our mission, because what we are doing is working. The week of 5 Jun was very significant for the company. We discovered three large weapons caches placed along the Euphrates River. These caches were of great importance-they contained several hundred artillery and mortar rounds, 57mm and 62mm rockets as well as numerous RPG launchers and rockets. These artillery rounds are used to create the "IED" or improvised explosive device. The enemy buries these rounds along the roadsides in order to detonate them in the vicinity of passing convoys. The 57mm and 62mm rockets are set up on remote controlled platforms to also engage passing convoys. After discovering these caches, with the help of our beloved EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams) we blow them up and watch with great pride as the hopes of our enemy goes up in smoke. The pressure we are putting

*(Continued on page 10)*

and weighing in at 7 pounds, 7 ounces. Kathleen Visarraga gave birth to Vincent Frederick Visarraga on 27 May. Vincent measured 19 inches and weighed 6 pounds, 11 ounces and is reportedly a smaller, yet more handsome version of his father, HN Visarraga. Congratulations to both these set of parents and their families. Our prayers go out to Nicole and Kathleen as they care for these precious newborns without the aid of their husbands for a few more months.

*(Continued on page 12)*

## KILO

Greetings from Al Qa'im to the Kilo Family,

Okay, here we are again – another month down and now just 3 more to go – I can't believe how quickly this deployment is going by. I know, though, that it's not going by that quickly for you, our loved ones, at home. But regardless of this, your support remains unconditional and steadfast, and for that, I thank you. As I've said before, your support of these American Sons is the foundation of our success over here, and we simply could not do this job without knowing that you are behind us 100 percent. So, from the man who has the unparalleled privilege of watching these amazing young men perform so remarkably on a daily basis, without complaint, I say, "Thank you."

The month of May has seen the lowest level of enemy activity in Kilo's zone, so this has been a much quieter month than those previous. However, it has nonetheless been extremely busy, as your Marines continue to prepare Karabila's security  
*(Continued on page 9)*

## INDIA COMPANY

Greetings to all of our friends and families! I hope that this letter finds you all well. Here in western Iraq the men of India Company continue in their steadfast performance despite the rising temperatures and uncertain times that lie ahead. I know that without a doubt your Marines will be ready for whatever the future may hold.

News from home this past month brought several notes of joy to our area. Not the least of these was the news that the India Team had increased its numbers by two. LCpl Clocherty and his wife Nicole saw Madelyn Rose enter this world on 17 May, measuring 20 ½ inches



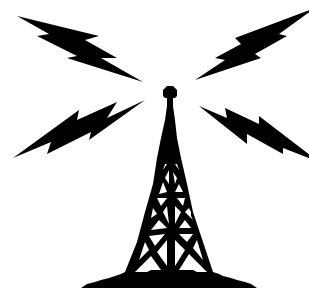
Marines from the Assault Section, Weapons Platoon, Company I conduct training near Camp Al Qa'im.



### Contacts

**KV Coordinators:** Mandi Roe  
**KV Co Coordinator:** Lorie Lasater  
**KV Advisor:** Lynn Lopez  
**H&S:** Sheila Blazer  
**India:** Betty McIver & Kamey Tippet  
**Kilo:** Sabrina Salcido  
**Lima:** Amber Jaramillo  
**Weapons:** Faith Longoria

Please call between the hours of 8 a.m.— 9 p.m. Thank you!  
 (760) 830-7345  
[37fro@29palms.usmc.mil](mailto:37fro@29palms.usmc.mil)



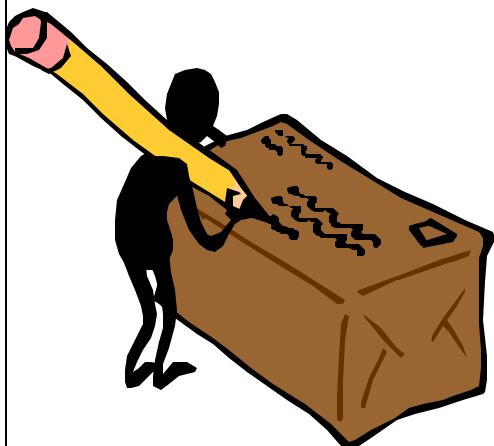
### Alert!

**If your loved one is seriously injured you will be notified by the Family Readiness Officer (FRO) within 24 hours of him receiving the information. Don't believe the so-called "prank" phone calls that anything has happened to your Marine or Sailor. Report such activity to your local police department immediately. Trust only what you hear from your Key Volunteer, the FRO, or from your loved one.**

### Preparing Packages

Packages from home are very special to our deployed Marines. Here is the proper protocol for preparing those packages from the United States Postal Service.

- Choose a box with enough room for cushioning material around the contents. Cardboard works best however old alcohol or cigarette boxes cannot be shipped.
- Print the delivery address parallel to the longest side of the packages with a pen or permanent marker so that the address is legible from an arm's length away. Print the return address in the upper left corner on the same side of the packages as the delivery address.
- Tape the opening of your box and reinforce all seams with clear, 2" wide tape. Do not use duct tape.
- Place a strip of clear packaging tape over your label to prevent the address from smearing.



- Placing an extra address label with the delivery and return addresses inside the packages will ensure it will be delivered in case the outside labels are damaged or fall off.
  - Packages heavier than 70 pounds cannot be mailed.
- Next care package mailing date is:

July 15th

HOUSING FORMS ARE AVAILABLE ON THEIR WEBSITE AT  
<http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/dirs/inl/housing/HsgMain.asp>.

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET YOU CAN CONTACT THE REMAIN BEHIND ELEMENT AT BUILDING 1538 TO PICK UP THE NECESSARY FORMS. EXTENDED VISITORS PASS, ABSENCE FROM QUARTERS, ETC.

**Next KV meeting will be held on July 26th. Please contact your KV for more information.**



Our condolences to the Families of the following Marines that gave their lives on July 5th, 2004.

LCpl John Van Gyzen from Rhode Island  
 LCpl Michael Torres from El Paso, Texas  
 Cpl Dallas Kerns from Springfield, Missouri



**Marines scheduled to return in July.**

SGT COZART	CPL MENDEZ
CPL MIRANDA	LCPL LANGLEY
LCPL GAGE	SSGT KERSEY
CPL THOMAS	CPL LEDFORD
PFC MATA	CPL HINSON
CPL MCAULAY	LCPL HENSLEY
CPL MULLEN	PFC HENRIQUEZ
CPL PETERS	LCPL HALLACK
CPL POOLE	SSGT WRIGHT
CPL RODRIGUEZ	CPL WILSON
CPL SMITH	CPL WARD
LCPL GARZA	

**CONDOLENCE LETTERS CAN BE SENT TO FAMILIES AT THE BELOW ADDRESS:**

CPL DUNHAM, JASON  
 C/O  
 SSGT LEAR  
 3 PORTER AVENUE  
 BUFFALO, NY 14201

MAJ GANNON, RICHARD  
 GANNON FAMILY  
 3104 B UPSHUR AVE  
 TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA 92278

CPL GIBSON, CHRISTOPHER  
 SSGT MAXWELL  
 1ST TANK BN  
 TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA 92278

PFC MORRIS, RICKY  
 C/O  
 CAPT TEAGUE, C  
 301 EAST REGIS STREET SUITE 1137  
 LUBBOCK, TX 79403

PFC SMITH, BRANDON  
 C/O  
 GYSGT NIGOLIAN, JON K  
 8005 CAMP ROBINSON RD.  
 NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AK 72118-2206

LCPL SMITH, MICHAEL  
 C/O  
 CAPT DEMPSEY  
 NAVY & MARINE CORPS RESERVE CENTER  
 1600 LAFAYETTE AVE.  
 MOUNDSVILLE, WA 26041-2347

LCPL TORREZ, ELIAS  
 TORREZ FAMILY  
 PO BOX 456  
 VERIBEST, TX 76886

LCPL VALDEZ, RUBEN  
 C/O  
 SSGT OSWALT  
 1ST TANK BN  
 TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA 92278

**WE HAVE MOVED!**

DUE TO 3RD BN, 4TH MARINES RETURNING IN JULY WE GAVE THEM OUR WORK SPACE BUILDING. WE HAVE MOVED TO THE SECOND FLOOR OF BUILDING 1538. OUR PHONE NUMBERS WILL REMAIN THE SAME.

**Remain Behind Element NCOIC:** Sgt Palzkill, T. (760) 830-6661

**Need orders?** Contact 1st Marine Detachment at (760) 830-5824

**NEWSLETTER ARTICLES AND ADDRESS UPDATES**— LCPL POLLARD AT (760) 830-5305

**FOR GENERAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AND THE LATEST BATTALION NEWS STORIES CLICK ON:**  
[www.29palms.usmc.mil/fmf/3-7/default.asp](http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/fmf/3-7/default.asp)

<b>UPDATED HOTLINE NUMBER:</b>	<b>1-800-759-7602</b>
<b>HOUSING OFFICE:</b>	<b>830-6611</b>
<b>AMERICAN RED CROSS</b>	<b>830-6685</b>
<b>CAREER RESOURCE CENTER</b>	<b>830-7225</b>
<b>CHAPLAINS (BASE)</b>	<b>830-6304</b>
<b>DEERS (ID CARDS)</b>	<b>830-7326</b>
<b>IPAC</b>	<b>830-1818</b>
<b>LEGAL</b>	<b>830-6111</b>
<b>NAVY-MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY</b>	<b>830-6323</b>

<b>NAVAL HOSPITAL 29PALMS</b>	<b>830-2190</b>
<b>BETHESDA MEDICAL CENTER (MD)</b>	<b>301-295-6111</b>
<b>BALBOA MEDICAL CENTER (CA)</b>	<b>619-532-6104</b>
<b>WILLFORD HALL (TX)</b>	<b>210-671-1130</b>
<b>LANDSTUHL GERMANY</b>	<b>01149-6371-86-6677</b>



## HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE

“Above all, we must realize that no arsenal, or no weapon in the arsenals of the world, is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women. It is a weapon our adversaries in today’s world do not have.” – Ronald Reagan

It is the will of our Marines and Sailors to continue on the mission of making Iraq safer for everyone that guarantees our success. Without a doubt, the United States has supplied the moral courage for the world to rid Iraq of its previous regime and it will be our moral courage to ensure that we continue operating in Iraq until this country is a stable state in the region. It will most likely take many more years to ensure this outcome, but we’re rest assured that we’ll be back home around late September to be with friends and family again.

A number of us have much more to come back to now. A couple of months ago I said that we would have quite a few Marines and sailors and their wives expecting babies during this deployment. That flood of births has begun. I’m proud to announce the birth of my first child. My wife Kristen gave birth to Braden Everett Mills in the early morning of 19 May and he was 6 lbs., 10 oz. and 19 inches long. The Company Executive Officer, First Lieutenant Jess Larca, and his wife Kelly had a baby boy, Logan Charles Larca, on 4 June. He was 7 lbs. and 21 inches long. Lance Corporal Lopez and his wife Lina had a 6 lbs., 8oz. and 19 inches long baby boy named Elias Daniel Lopez on 9 June. The Battalion Adjutant and his wife Christina had a baby girl, Lillian Austin Mai, on 14 June. She was 6 lbs., 7 oz. and 19 inches long. Congratulations to all these families. While it would have been great to have all the expecting fathers back home in time for the

*(Continued on page 11)*

## LIMA COMPANY

Family, friends, and supporters:

Company L continues to do great work in Husaybah, Iraq. As we move into the summer months, the temperature out here continues to increase. But along with the temperature increase are the Marines’ spirits as the quality of life around the camp improves. Operationally, the Marines of Company L have made a tremendous impact on the city of Husaybah treating the locals with the highest levels of professionalism.

In the last four months, relations with the security forces in Husaybah have vastly improved. The Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) and the Iraqi Police Department (IZPD) continue to conduct joint patrols with Marine patrols on a regular basis as well as patrol on their own and man vehicle check points. As the transfer of authority from the provisional government to the new Iraqi government draws near, Marine patrols will transition into strictly joint patrols with the ICDC and the IZPD. The purpose behind the joint patrols will be to show strong support toward the new government and its ability to provide stability and security to the people. Our presence in the city will slowly decrease as the ICDC and IZPD become stronger.

In Camp Husaybah, Company L hosted a basketball and a horseshoe tournament. Both had a large turn out of contenders. Winners of the tournament received a Cassette/CD “Boom Box” while second and third place winners received sports socks and a pat on the back. Donations from the tournament went to the Marine Corps Birthday Ball Fund. Lima Company, 1s Platoon won the “3 on 3” Basketball tournament while the Navy Sea-



LCpl Ryan Bilbao, Squad Leader, Kilo Two-One, briefs a few Karabila Police Officers before a patrol, with the assistance of Sam, the Kilo Translator.

*(Continued on page 12)*



LCpls Cervantes, Hyatt, and Hester, Kilo 43, take a break at the Karabila Police Station.

We continue to run weekly car washes in support of raising money for this year's Birthday Ball in Nevada. Special thanks to Corporal Chavarria for organizing these washes and to the following spouses for coming out to help.

Ireland Davis	Sally Gannon
Beth Carpenter	Rebecca Johnston
Lydsie French	Michele Awtry
Evina McCallister	Maria McGraw
Melissa Weable	Gloria Luna

Cpl Chavarria at 830-7345 or your KV rep. The next planned bake sale and car wash will be the week of 16 July.

#### 229TH MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY BALL

Dear 3/7 Family and Friends,

November 11th is fast approaching. We will be celebrating the 229th Birthday Ball at the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada this year. The hotel has blocked 450 rooms for our use (more rooms can be made available if we need them). We will enjoy a one-hour open bar and a buffet style dinner in the Grand Ballroom. You can take a virtual tour of the Grand Ballroom at [www.tropicalnvlv.com](http://www.tropicalnvlv.com). Hawaiian Rooms #1 and #2 are just across the hall and will be available for an on site babysitting service. We are raising money through our soda mess fund and donations in order to offset the cost of food, party favors, music, audio-visual, and labor. The Ball will be held on Thursday November 11, 2004 from 6:00PM-11:00PM. You may begin reserving rooms now (Tropicana reservations 1-800-634-4000). Indicate that you are reserving a room for the **USMC Birthday Ball-3rd Battalion, 7th Marines**. The rates are as follows:

Single/Double Occupancy or one bedroom suite

Wednesday November 10, 2004	\$49.00	\$209.00
Thursday November 11, 2004	\$49.00	\$209.00
Friday November 12, 2004	\$99.00	\$249.00
Saturday November 13, 2004	\$99.00	\$249.00

If you have any questions, please contact me at [fleming92@yahoo.com](mailto:fleming92@yahoo.com). Thank you.

Semper Fidelis,  
J. David Fleming  
1stLt USMC

#### UPCOMING EVENTS ON BASE

##### Commanding General's Intramural Soccer

June 14 - July 31, 5:30 - 7 p.m.  
Felix Field

##### "Read for the Gold"

Summer Reading Program  
Jun 17 - Jul 22  
Lifelong Learning Library

##### Military Spouse Social

July 16th, 2-4 PM  
Marine Corps Exchange

##### South Pacific Luau and Pig Roast

July 16th, 6-8 PM  
O' Club

##### School Vacation Special- Bowling

Now- 10 September  
Mon- Fri, 12-5 PM  
830-6422

##### Letters to the editor:

If you have questions or comments that you would like to share, please send them to the below address. Please try to keep your comments under 100 words.

Please send your comments to:  
Battalion Newsletter  
Attn: FRO  
3rd Bn, 7th Marines  
Box 788263  
Twentynine Palms, CA 92278





forces to take control of the area on June 30<sup>th</sup>. Here are a few photos of your Marines at work this last month...

Congratulations to the following Marines for their promotions:

Kilo Two:  
HM<sub>3</sub> Michael Scarberry  
Kilo Three:  
Cpl Fernando Cabeza  
HM<sub>3</sub> Humberto Silva  
Kilo Four:  
LCpl Benjamin Johns  
Kilo Headquarters:  
LCpl Don Schmidt (Meritorious)  
CAAT White:  
HM<sub>3</sub> John-Patrick Crate  
Cpl Jose Marquez



LCpl Chris Lellis, LCpl Frank Owen Jr., PFC Jeremy Dillon, and PFC Matt Riker of Kilo Two, prepared for patrol.

Special recognition goes out to HM<sub>3</sub> Adam Clarke (Kilo 1), in receiving the Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal for meritorious performance of his duties as a platoon corpsman in early March. During the convoy from Kuwait to Iraq, Doc Clarke responded to a 5-vehicle accident, performed triage of 5 casualties, and supervised aerial medevac for them. Great Job!

Congratulations to the following Marines for May & June Birthdays:

PFC Robert Brook - turned 20 on 22 May.  
LCpl Epifanio Cervantes - turns 20 on 23 June.  
LCpl Dustin Cox - turns 19 on 21 June.  
Cpl Ryan Cresswell - turned 23 on 7 May.  
LCpl Zackery Dutton - turned 19 on 16 May.  
SSgt John Ferguson - turned 31 on 4 June.  
LCpl Thomas Gordon - turns 21 on 16 June.  
LCpl Lorenzo Guzman - turned 20 on 1 June.  
LCpl Jeff Hyatt - turns 20 on 24 June.  
PFC Jason Johnson - turned 20 on 25 May.  
LCpl Christopher Lellis - turns 22 on 25 June.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Brian Robinson - turned 25 on 9 June.  
LCpl Ascension Rodriguez III - turned 19 on 2 May.  
LCpl Brendan Ruiz - turned 19 on 7 May.  
LCpl Jason Sanders - turned 22 on 14 June.  
LCpl Brian Schultz - turned 19 on 28 May.  
LCpl Edwin Saponmazariegos - turned 21 on 15 May.  
PFC Zachary Squires - turns 19 on 30 June.  
LCpl Michael Torres - turned 21 on 8 June.  
LCpl Jon Vangyzen - turns 21 on 16 June.  
LCpl Pedro Villarreal - turned 22 on 10 May.  
LCpl Jonathan Weldon - turned 23 on 12 June.  
Saman Kareem Ahmad (K Co Translator) - turned 35 on 06 June.

Lastly, special congratulations to Sergeant Jose Trejo of Kilo 1 and his wife, Denise, on the birth of their daughter, Layla Rae Michelle Trejo on 18 May.

Until next time, remember that you are all loved and missed, and that your Kilo Marines are making a difference, day in and day out, for the people of this far-off land. Thank you, as always, for your strength and support. We will all be back soon. Semper Fi.

- Captain Trent A. Gibson

on the enemy is intense and we will continue to do so.

Obviously, 01 July will be an important day for the Coalition. On this day, the transfer of authority to Independent Iraqi Government is planned. We do not expect our mission to change much. We will continue to remain vigilant with our security efforts in our region as well as providing humanitarian assistance to the civilians of Al Qaim. It is easy to forget how significant the Battalion's efforts are with International affairs and how your sons are a key factor in that. Whether it is securing the national highways of western Iraq or controlling the Border checkpoint with Iraq and Syria, everything we are doing is crucial to the success of creating a safe country for the people of Iraq.

We would like to wish the very best of luck to the following Marines who are either EAS or moving on to another duty station: Pfc Carter, LCpl Godley, LCpl Garcia, Cpl Valerio, and Cpl Weatherby. Thank you all very much for your service-you all did an outstanding job for our Battalion. Continued prayers and thoughts go out to the French and Kelly family as well as all the families of our wounded or fallen brothers. Congratulations are in order for GySgt Holland. He took first place in the Camp Al Qaim lip synching contest with his powerful rendition of Gloria Gaynor's classic seventies hit "I will survive."

As I close for this month, I ask that you please continue to support each other in the states and know that your sons are serving in an outstanding battalion. We will continue to make you proud and I look forward to seeing you all when we get back in the near future. Thanks again for your support.

T.R. POWLEDGE



**PFCs Matt Liwen and Zach Squires take a well-deserved break at the Karabila Police Station after a patrol.**



**LCpl Julio Torres, Kilo Two-One, readies himself to "go ashore".**

*(Continued from page 7)*

births, I'm sure these children will be very proud to know that their fathers were serving halfway around the world making sure that their families had a safe home for them to grow up in.

We may not know who will be the President for the next four years, but we know that Staff Sergeant Jose E. Facundo will be in the Marine Corps for the next four years. Staff Sergeant Facundo, the Battalion Supply Chief, raised his right hand in mid May and reenlisted. His continued service will be a great benefit to the Marine Corps and a special thanks to his family for supporting his career.

Promotions were abundant in the past month. The Company is now full of salty First Lieutenants. The Battalion Adjutant, Waiann Mai, and the Battalion Communications Officer, James D'elia, were both promoted to First Lieutenant on 24 May. Promotions for June were Bryon Keilman to the rank of Sergeant, Akram Fallah (meritoriously), Raul Romero Jr. and Adam R. Santiago to Corporal, and Brian A. Bull, Keith C. Naillon (attached to India Company), Donald J. Schmidt (attached to Kilo Company), Daniel Skelton, Van Thor, and Ricardo Viera to Lance Corporal. Bull, Naillon, and Schmidt were all promoted meritoriously. Additionally, Christopher D. Lee joined the ranks of staff non-commissioned officers with his promotion to Staff Sergeant.

A number of Marines were also recipients of much deserved awards this past month. Captain David Moore received both a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and the Air Medal for his exceptional performance in a harrier squadron last year. Staff Sergeant Edward J. McGee was also awarded a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his professional excellence as the Career Planner at his previous command. Corporal Adam R. Santiago, Lance Corporal Robert J. Bautzman, and Lance Corporal Raymond B. George were each presented the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for their superior efforts in supporting the Battalion's mission in Iraq.

Welcome additions to Headquarters and Service Company are Communications Platoon have been Lance Corporals Michael R. Armendariz, Emanuel C. King, and Steven L. Rawlins and Privates First Class Jose E. CastellanoLopez and Jesus R. Javier to the Communications Platoon. The Supply Section has gained Lance Corporal Bradley E. Bennett and Privates First Class Boeun Locke, Devon G. Kalbas, and Michael M. Rowell. The presence of these new Marines has greatly reduced some of the manpower burden on the other sections. Another welcome sight is Hospitalman First Class Armando Garza with the Battalion Aid Station.

I'd like to send out best wishes to some personnel who have recently made their way home for medical reasons and will most likely not rejoin us in Iraq. Lieutenant Mark Dearden is recovering from minor surgery and Lance Corporal Mark A. Pannek is back in 29 Palms to rehab his ankle. We all know that they would rather be back here with the rest of the Marines and sailors.

Daily life has greatly improved with more frequent re-supply of our camp PX and the return of the Iraqis who are running the Chicken Shack. The Chicken Shack was originally in business when we first took over the camp from the previous Army unit. We gave the Iraqis a new place to fix up and do business. After telling us it would only take a few weeks, they have finally opened one back up three months later, but better than ever. For five dollars or less, camp personnel can buy pizzas, roasted chicken, french fries and a few other items. We were slacking in our Birthday Ball Fund Raising for the first half of our deployment, but the Company is now in full swing. A soda mess, some raffles, and a few other concocted ideas should hopefully help pay for every Marine and sailor and their date to attend the Battalion's Birthday Ball at no cost in November. It'll be here before we know it.

Captain Barron Mills



Bees won the Horseshoe Tournament. A Volleyball tournament in addition to All-Camp Husaybah Sports Tournament is in the making. Currently, SSgt Matthew Carpenter and SSgt Carl Scott are holding tryouts for Camp Husaybah team to challenge the Camp Al Qaim team in a five game series of basketball. The series will begin some time in July.

Regarding the personal lives of Marines, some of the men have been promoted or celebrated birthdays. For the month of June, Happy Birthday to Pfc Lue Vue (21), LCpl Joshua Rutherford (22), LCpl Daniel Layton (21), LCpl Wesley Hayes (22), LCpl Richard Lavender (23), LCpl Todd Avery, LCpl Adao Ludovico, LCpl Travis Greene (22), Cpl Peter Milinkovic (20), Cpl Johnathan Talbott (22), Sgt William Champion (23), and SSgt Matthew St. Pierre (30). Congratulations to William Davis who was recently promoted to Corporal. William Uban and Ricardo Viera were also promoted to Lance Corporal. Special congratulations to Matthew Carpenter and Matthew St Pierre who were recently selected for Gunnery Sergeant.

In conclusion, the men of Company L would like to thank all of you for the generous support, thoughts, and prayers. They have made a tremendous impact on our lives. Without your loyal support, the deployment would have been much harder. The Marines are making sacrifices daily and continue to hold themselves in the highest spirits because of your thoughts. We will continue to stay the course, maintain our high standard of professionalism, and make all of you proud.

D. B. NEAL



Promotions and meritorious achievements were in no short order this last month. Corporal Granberry was promoted to his current rank meritoriously. Other Marines promoted to Corporal this past month were Corporals Gonzales, Pedregosa, Barclay, and Mackail. Up and coming in the ranks as well were Lance Corporal Naillon, who was meritoriously promoted, and Lance Corporal Contento. Also, HN Humarang was awarded a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for his recent actions. Congratulations to all these Marines for their hard work and dedication to the mission at hand.

As our Marines press into their fourth month of force protection I would like to take the time to comment on their work. The necessity of the mission that your Marines are performing cannot be overstated. They are the ones responsible for ensuring that the camp we operate from is in a sense a "safe haven" for all units. That job does not always provide for new and exciting adventures, but more accurately requires diligence and discipline in the face of seemingly unchanging scenes and events. Some of you have no doubt heard some frustrations that have been expressed by your Marines. Our Marines, like all Marines, have a desire to be as close to the fighting as they can be. I ask you to please understand their frustrations and continue to support their vitally important efforts.

Your support and dedication to our mission and your Marines is what provides the foundation for our success. The days that we spend apart, although difficult in many ways, are made easier knowing that you all have the situation back home well in hand. Please accept again, my heartfelt appreciation for all your efforts that enable our success. As we continue to fight the good fight, we do so knowing that the Lord watches not only our steps, but also those of our loved ones back home. May God bless you all.

B. W. TIPPETT









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